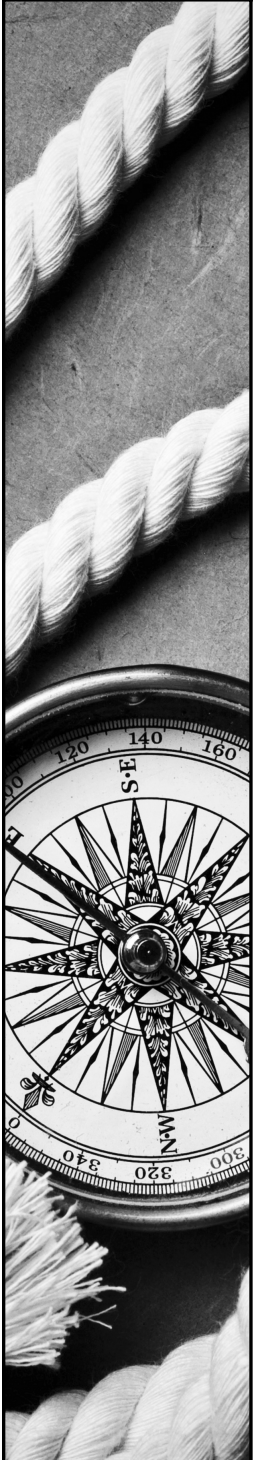


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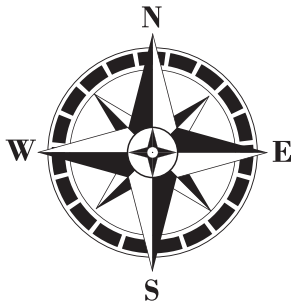


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- 3.1.4 G.5 Recognize third person point of view.
- 3.1.4 G.6 Identify and summarize central ideas in informational text.

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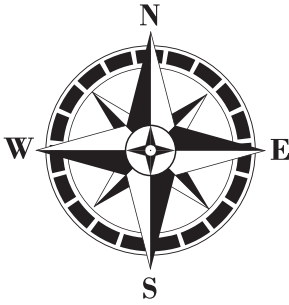
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- 3.1.4 G.4 Discuss author’s opinions and how they reflect culture, ethnicity, gender, and historical periods.
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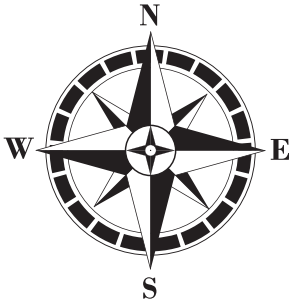
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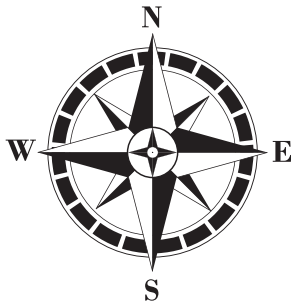
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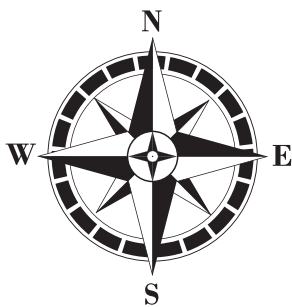
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## Text Elements

### Theme, Central Idea, and Supporting Details

#### W1: RECOGNITION OF CENTRAL IDEA OR THEME

#### W2: RECOGNITION OF SUPPORTING DETAILS

When reading a passage, it is important to be able to identify the central idea, theme, and supporting details of the text. Once you have learned about these terms, it will be easier to select them out of the story. Many of the questions you will see on the ASK4 Language Arts Literacy Test will ask you about central idea, theme, and supporting details.

Every passage you will read in this book will have a central idea or theme. Many of the question you will be asked will have to do with identifying the central idea or theme.



### YOU TRY IT

You have been assigned to do a book report for homework where you have to answer questions about the story you have read. The first question asks you to write down the theme of the story. How would you find your answer?

- Do you just rewrite the story?
- Do you tell exactly what happened in the story?
- Do you think about what the story was trying to say?

Your best bet is to think about what the moral, or lesson, was in the story. Think about why the story was written. See if you can write a general sentence that explains the moral, or lesson, in this story.

## W1: RECOGNITION OF CENTRAL IDEA OR THEME



### What is a central idea, or theme?

A **central idea** or **theme** is a general statement that covers the big idea in the reading passage.

Sometimes the central idea or theme is stated in the passage. Other times the central idea or theme is not stated and the reader has to infer it. Throughout the text there are clues that help the reader understand the central idea or theme.

### Examples of a central idea or theme statements include:

- One good deed leads to another.
- Treat others the way you would like to be treated.
- Animals can adapt to their environment in unusual ways.

### Here are some ways to find the central idea or theme:

- Look at the title of the passage or the story.  
Sometimes this will give you clues about the central idea or theme.
- Notice the details in the passage or the story.  
What greater meaning might they be pointing to? This larger meaning is the central idea or theme.
- Try to write a headline, or a sentence, of less than five words to explain what the passage is about.

## W2: RECOGNITION OF SUPPORTING DETAILS



What are supporting details?

**Supporting details** are ideas or sentences that build upon or explain the central idea.

An author uses details to explain his or her point of view and to help readers understand the central idea.

These details could be facts or any additional parts of the story that build upon the central idea.

If you find the central idea first, it will be easier to determine which sentences are the supporting details.

**Here is an example showing central idea and supporting details. Read the passage below.**

Do you know an animal that can stand on the lawn, peek in a window on the second floor of your house, and not even have to stretch to do it? A giraffe could do it!

A male giraffe can grow to be as tall as eighteen feet and to weigh as much as three thousand pounds. When a baby giraffe is born, it is about six feet tall. About an hour later, the little giraffe can stand up and walk! Giraffes eat leaves, about seventy-five pounds a day. Their favorite leaves come from the acacia tree. All over the world, people admire the enormous size, natural beauty, and mild nature of the giraffe.

**The central idea of this paragraph is that giraffes are large, very tall animals.**

**The supporting details for that central idea are:**

- A baby giraffe is about six feet tall when it is born.
- A giraffe eats about 75 pounds of leaves every day.
- A male giraffe can be 18 feet tall and weigh 3,000 pounds.



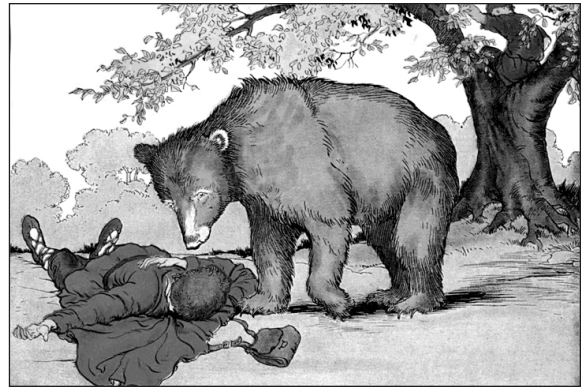
## LET'S TRY IT TOGETHER

**DIRECTIONS** Read the story and together we will discuss the questions.

# The Bear and the Two Travelers

from Aesop's Fables

Two men were traveling together when a Bear suddenly met them on their path. One of them climbed up quickly into a tree and hid himself in the branches. The other, seeing that he might be attacked, fell flat on the ground. The Bear came up, felt him with his snout, and smelled him all over. The man held his breath, and tried to look like he was dead.



The Bear soon left him, for it is said that a Bear will not touch a dead body. When he was quite gone, the other Traveler descended from the tree, and jokingly asked his friend what it was that the Bear had whispered in his ear. "He gave me this advice," his companion replied. "Never travel with a friend who deserts you at the approach of danger." ■

What is the central idea, or theme, of this fable?

**Is it that it is dangerous to travel on foot?**

No. Although the fable does seem to suggest that traveling on foot can be dangerous, that is not the theme.

**Is it that being able to climb trees is a useful skill?**

No. Although the fable does tell about how the one man stayed safe by climbing a tree, that is not the theme.

**Is it that misfortune shows what a friend is truly made of?**

Yes! That is the theme of the story. Overall, the story is showing that true friendship is tested in times of trouble.

The story says that a true friend would not have left his friend alone to face the Bear. Even the Bear knew that!



## What are the supporting details?



Let's use a graphic organizer to sort out the supporting details from this story.

Two travelers meet a bear.

One man climbs a tree to hide.

The other man falls down and pretends to be dead.

The bear walks over to the man on the ground, sniffs him, and goes away.

The man who had climbed the tree comes down.

He asks what the bear had told the other man.

The man replies that the bear's advice was not to trust a friend who leaves when danger appears.

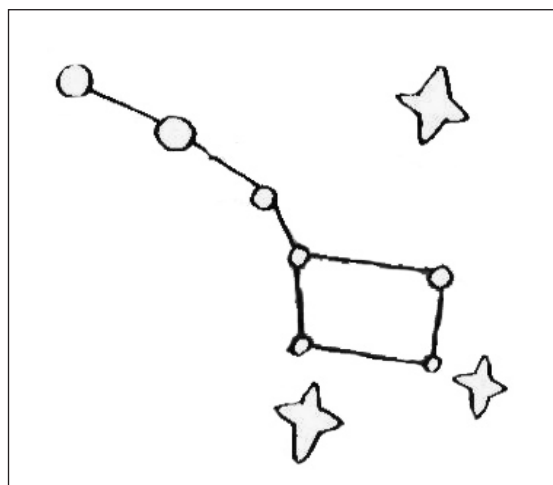
## YOU TRY IT

**DIRECTIONS** Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.

### Sky Lights

Different tribes have their own myths about certain groups of stars. A Pueblo American Indian group in New Mexico tells the story their own way. They say that their people were returning home after being driven away by a flood. A girl was given a small bag to carry back with her. The girl became curious about the contents of the bag and untied it. Stars fell out of the bag and scattered everywhere, most of them flying into the sky. If they hadn't escaped, the stars would all have had names and would have been placed properly in the sky. For this reason, people only know the names of a few stars in the sky. The rest of the names remain unknown.

The Big Dipper is one of the most easily recognized groups of stars. In the northeast region of the United States, the constellation was known by some as "Bear and Hunters." The Northern Paiute called it "Rabbit Net" and the Southern Paiute thought of it as "Mountain Sheep." Western Shoshone, in the same region, said the Big Dipper was "Men Chasing Rabbits into a Net." A northwest tribe described the constellation as "The Divers." It reminded the tribe of birds—loons that dive for food.



*Big Dipper*

To the Blackfoot and several other tribes, the Big Dipper was "Seven Brothers and a Sister." One version of the story surrounding this name tells of a woman who turned into a bear. The beast chased some children up a tree. In order to escape, one brother used a special feather. The children waved the feather and with it they escaped into the sky. The brothers became the Big Dipper and the sister is a small, nearby star. A similar version of the story describes the youngest brother becoming the

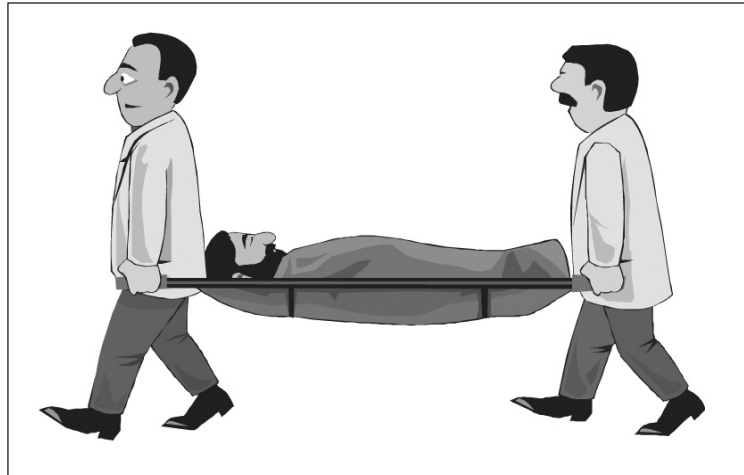


#### CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Why do you think there are many different stories about the groups of stars in the sky?

North Star. His sister, who cared for him, is the star that points toward the North Star.

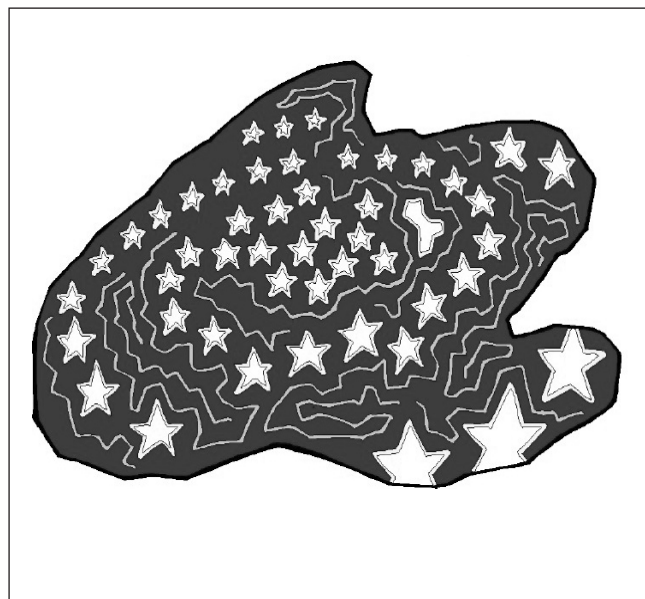
Tribal myths were also used to explain the Little Dipper's existence. One northeastern tribe called it "Three Hunters in a Canoe." Another said it was "Beaver that Spreads Its Skin." A third tribe, the Pawnee of the Great Plains, knew it as "Little Stretcher." Some myths about both the Big Dipper and Little Dipper see them as stretchers. They describe the four stars that form a square shape carrying someone, just as a stretcher would. The other three stars were meant to be the family following behind.



The Milky Way with its masses of stars appears in many myths. An Apache tribe described the Milky Way with a story about two warrior gods. A fight took place between these two beings. One was carrying seeds in a container. During the fight, the container was overturned. The seeds scattered and became the stars of the Milky Way. These stars reminded the Apache to get along with each other and live a good life.

For many tribes, the Milky Way constellation was seen as a pathway traveled by the souls of the dead. It was also called the "Flight of Migrating Birds" or the "Backbone of the Universe or Sky." Other stories called it "Spider's Web," "White Beans," and even "Trail of Bubbles."

Some Americans Indians had rich imaginations, as revealed through their star myths. Through these stories, the people were attempting to explain the mysteries of life and the universe. ■



*Milky Way*

**1. The purpose of the first paragraph is to**

- A. show readers how American Indian people became famous.
- B. tell readers why it is harder to see stars today.
- C. give an explanation for why some of the stars are not named.
- D. describe different names for the Big Dipper.



**HELPFUL HINTS**

This question asks you to recall a detail from the passage. If you are unsure of the answer, reread the second paragraph.

**2. Why did one tribe call the Big Dipper "The Divers"?**

- A. because it reminded them of a group of birds that dive for food
- B. because it reminded them of a type of net used to catch animals
- C. because it reminded them of a group of children that ran up a tree
- D. because it reminded them of a trail of bubbles through the sky



**HELPFUL HINTS**

This question asks you to think about the reason why the author wrote the first paragraph. Reread the paragraph. What does it tell you?

**3. Which prefix can you add to "used" to make it mean "used incorrectly"?**

- A. re-
- B. pre-
- C. un-
- D. mis-



**HELPFUL HINTS**

This question asks you to identify the correct prefix to make a word that would mean "used incorrectly." To help find the correct answer, try placing each of the prefixes in front of the word "used."

**4. What did the Pawnee tribe of the Great Plains call the Little Dipper?**

- A. "Flight of Migrating Birds"
- B. "Little Stretcher"
- C. "Rabbit Net"
- D. "Three Hunters in a Canoe"



**HELPFUL HINTS**

This question asks you to recall a detail from the passage. If you are unsure of the answer, reread paragraph 4.

**5. What did the stars of the Milky Way remind the Apache people to do?**

- A. be kind to all the animals
- B. get along with one another
- C. treat the Earth with respect
- D. keep learning new things



**HELPFUL HINTS**

This question asks you to recall a detail from the passage. If you are unsure of the answer, reread paragraph 5. You should look for a mention of the Apache people.

**6. Why did the author most likely write this passage?**

- A. to show readers where the different tribes used to live
- B. to tell readers what different groups of stars look like
- C. to describe how different groups of stars move across the sky
- D. to explain the names different tribes had for groups of stars



**HELPFUL HINTS**

This question asks you to identify the author's purpose for writing this passage. Think about what you have read. What did the author want the reader to know about?

**FOR THE OPEN-ENDED QUESTION BELOW, REMEMBER TO:**

- Pay attention to what the question is asking you.
- Be sure to answer everything the question asks you.
- Fully explain what you mean by your answer.
- Use details from the story/passage.



**7. The article describes different myths created by American Indian tribes to help them explain the universe around them.**

- **Describe why telling stories like these were probably an important part of American Indian culture.**
- **Give at least three reasons for your conclusions.**

**Use information from the article to support your response.**

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